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RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY
RHHMUNA/CDR USPACOM HONOLULU HI PRIORITY
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TAGS: [PREF](#) [PGOV](#) [PTER](#) [PHUM](#) [NP](#)
SUBJECT: NEW IDP POLICY

REF: A. 05 KATHMANDU 1453

[1](#)B. KATHMANDU 690

Classified By: CDA John Schlosser. Reasons 1.4 (b/d).

Summary

[1](#)1. (U) His Majesty's Government of Nepal (HMGN) announced a new policy for internally displaced persons (IDPs) on March [1](#)13. Home Minister Kamal Thapa, releasing the policy, explained that it was drafted in accordance with international humanitarian principles and designed to provide immediate humanitarian assistance to people who were internally displaced due to the ongoing conflict. The policy tasked the Home Ministry to take the lead on IDP issues, though it was noted that the policy would be implemented through different bodies. Human rights groups welcomed the policy, but said that much depended on the government's willingness and ability to implement the policy. End Summary.

Definition of IDPs

[1](#)2. (U) On March 13, Home Minister Kamal Thapa released a policy for IDPs. The content of the 12 page policy was similar to the provisions detailed to donors in June 2005 (ref A). The following is HMGN's definition of IDPs, divided into four categories:

- a) Displaced person or family: those compelled to move for various reasons from their place of origin to other parts of the country.
- b) Displaced person or family due to conflict: those physically disabled due to violent conflict, or loss of their home/property, or those involved in violent activities before and are now surrendered, or displaced due to serious threats and moved to another part of the country where shelter was available.
- c) Man-made displacement of person or family: those compelled to leave their place of origin due to development activities,

construction, industrial growth, etc.

d) Displacement of person or family due to natural disasters.

Main Policy Objectives

13. (U) The policy set forth seven objectives:

- a. To guarantee fundamental rights of the displaced individual or family.
- b. To provide needed facilities to IDPs without interruption.
- c. To address problems the displaced individual or family would encounter at the place where they are residing.
- d. To minimize problems of displacement.
- e. To address the possible difficulties in economic, social and cultural activities of displaced people.
- f. To enhance national and international commitment and assistance to displaced people.
- g. To rehabilitate displaced people and their families to allow them to reintegrate to their original place of residence.

Programs For The Displaced

14. (U) The government announced that, under the new policy, it would undertake the following activities:

- a. Keep a record of displaced people and provide identity cards and necessary services, such as proof of citizenship or passports.
- b. Provide market oriented short-term training for foreign employment, and also provide employment inside the country on the basis of qualification.
- c. Conduct special programs for displaced women, older people, and children, handicapped and orphaned.
- d. Provide a pension to the old and handicapped at the location where they were staying.
- e. Provide education by conducting special classes for those who have not been able to attend school.
- f. Carry out security and development work concurrently in the conflict zone, as directed by the Home Ministry and the Peace Secretariat.
- g. Conduct a nutrition program for children of displaced parents.
- h. Work toward returning the displaced to their original homes.
- i. Conduct integrated peace and development programs.
- j. Conduct studies, do research, and publish data on the area where the displaced people were located.
- k. Conduct trauma-healing treatment for mentally disturbed displaced people.
- l. Conduct mobile health services.

Agencies Tasked with IDP Assistance

15. (U) While HMGN tasked the Home Ministry with the main responsibility to carry out the policy, different governmental agencies, local bodies, NGOs, the private sector, and the local community will also implement the

policy. The Chief District Officer would have the responsibility to keep a record of all possible agencies that could assist displaced people at local levels. The District Administration Office would coordinate programs conducted at the district level though a district committee. At the central level, the Home Minister would chair a similar coordination committee. There would also be a program coordination committee set up under the chairmanship of the Chief Secretary of His Majesty's Government and the Head of the Peace Secretariat.

Human Rights Groups Cautiously Positive

16. (C) Yagya Prasad Adhikari, Deputy Director of the National Human Right Commission (NHRC), praised the government for finally focusing on the issue of IDPs. He noted that the government had based the policy on international human rights treaties that the government was party to, and so the policy itself was "good overall." However, he questioned the ability and the will of the government to implement the policy. The IDP adviser at the Nepal Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) found the policy to be "a step forward." However, he expressed concern with the policy's definition of IDPs, noting that it appeared to focus on Maoists forcing people to move, and did not recognize the possibility that the government could also displace people. (Note: Members of the Peace Secretariat had told the Embassy previously that while the government recognized it could cause displacement, and was committed to helping those it had displaced, HMGN could not formally admit this. Thus, HMGN would be purposely vague in the definition on the "various reasons" people were displaced. End note.) OHCHR worried that the policy did not have any provisions for prevention of displacement. Finally, OHCHR noted that the policy lacked clarity on who was in charge. While the policy noted that the Home Ministry was in the lead, it appeared to have a confusing number of new committees.

IDPs Concerned

17. (C) Ramesh Wagle, Association of Sufferers of Maoists, was critical of government efforts to date to assist displaced people. He explained that after the announcement of the new policy he had gone to the Home Ministry for a copy. However, the Ministry told him that copies of the policy to distribute to the public were not ready. He then asked to be told what the policy contained. The Ministry official had explained that IDPs would first have to register to obtain benefits. This angered Wagle, as he and those in his Association had already given their information to the government and were still waiting for assistance. He wondered why victims would again have to give information and register with the government. He was frustrated that, on the same day as releasing the IDP Policy, the government released a "Surrender and Rehabilitation Policy" (ref b) that promised large monetary rewards to Maoist terrorists who surrender to the government. He also noted that there was no promise of rewards for the innocent villagers whom the Maoists had displaced. He added that the government continued to view his group as politically affiliated, and he worried that the government would never assist him or members of his group.

Comment

18. (C) Post welcomes HMGN's efforts to address the issue of internally displaced people. Although this policy closely resembles the patchwork effort of the past, it at last officially articulates HMGN's objectives and definitions. It remains to be seen whether HMGN will allocate sufficient resources to implement its new IDP policy.

SCHLOSSER